

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An article conveying apparatus for conveying and transferring articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing the articles therein and a predetermined entry-and-exit port, the apparatus comprising:

a running truck body that runs along a track;

a platform provided with a transfer device that transfers the articles;

a pair of raising and lowering poles connected to said running truck body and extending vertically therefrom to guide and support said platform such that said platform is able to freely rise and lower;

a pair of raising and lowering cables each having one end connected to ~~[[a]]~~one of a front side end and a rear side ~~corresponding opposite~~ end of an upper part of said platform to suspend and support said platform;[[and]]

a tension setting device that is arranged on said platform and sets a tension of said pair of raising and lowering cables;

a driving wheel for feeding and winding said pair of raising and lowering cables, and raising and lowering said platform[[,]];

wherein said pair of raising and lowering cables are guided from the front side end and the rear side ~~opposite~~ end of the upper part of said platform to a vicinity of a central portion of said running truck body via said driving wheel, and further guided together vertically from the vicinity of the central portion of the running truck body to a vicinity of a central lower portion of said platform, the other end of each of said raising and lowering cables being connected to a vicinity of said central lower portion of said platform.

Claim 2 (canceled)

3. (currently amended) The article conveying apparatus according to ~~claim 2~~claim 1, wherein said tension setting device comprises:

a spring for setting the tension of each of said raising and lowering cables; and
an error detecting unit provided ~~[[in]]~~on said platform to detect an error in said raising and lowering cables on the basis of elongation of said spring.

4. (currently amended) The article conveying apparatus according to ~~claim 2~~claim 1, wherein said tension setting device comprises:

a spring;
a moving member having one end connected to the other end of said raising and lowering rope and the other end connected to one end of said spring;
a setting jig connected to the other end of said spring to set the tension of said raising and lowering cable; and
a detector for detecting, according to the moved distance of said moving member, that an error has occurred in elongation of said raising and lowering cable and that said raising and lowering cable has been cut.

5. (previously presented) The article conveying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said driving wheel is arranged at each of opposite ends of said running truck body.

6. (previously presented) The article conveying apparatus according to claim 5, comprising:

a first guide wheel provided at a top portion of one of the raising and lowering poles to guide one of said pair of raising and lowering cables in a horizontal direction from one end of an upper part of said platform;

a pair of second guide wheels provided at a top portion of the other raising and lowering pole to guide downward one of the raising and lowering cables guided from said first guide

wheel and to guide the other of the cables downward from the other end of the upper part of said platform;

a pair of third guide wheels provided at a bottom portion of said other raising and lowering pole to guide the pair of raising and lowering cables guided from said second guide wheel to said driving wheel; and

a pair of fourth guide wheels provided in said central portion of said running truck body to guide said pair of raising and lowering cables guided from said driving wheel to said vicinity of said central lower portion of said platform.